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L E T T E R S

O N

Different Subjects,

In FOUR VOLUMES;

Amongst which are interspers'd the

A D V E N T U R E S

O F

A L P H O N S O

After the Destruction of *Lisbon*.

By the AUTHOR of *The unfortunate Mother's
Advice to her absent Daughters.*

SECOND EDITION.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N :

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M.DCC.LXVII.



LETTER I.

To Capt. B——

SO well I know your thoughtless disposition, my dear friend, that ten thousand anxious fears alarm my breast at the thought of your present situation. I tremble for the dangerous path you tread, lest a pursuit too eager should leave the cautious steps of slow-paced reason in the rear too far to be your guide; while young desire, with her delusive train of flattering hopes, impatient wishes, and expected joys, thro' her perspective magnified to real happiness, precipi-

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B

tantly

tantly leads the warm'd imagination
 on, 'till a retreat becomes impossible :
 Then cool reflection, too late arrived
 may point to distant reason's slow ad-
 vance, and change the visionary scene
 of fancied bliss to vain repentance.
 Revere the counsel of a long expe-
 rienced friend ; in time be warn'd to
 shun that threaten'd danger, which
 you refuse to own, or will not see,
 now hovering round your heart.

Sincerely would my soul rejoice to
 see you joined in wedlock's social
 band with a deserving woman, wor-
 thy of yourself, who, superior to her
 sex's follies, would be the reasonable
 companion of your more serious hours,
 whose fortune was at least an equal
 ballance to the attendant inconveni-
 ency

ency of an encreasing family, and whose prudence knew how to regulate that family to your private satisfaction, and consistent with your public character; to these must be added a mild complying temper with a constant sweetness of disposition, productive of uninterrupted harmony: 'Till you find a woman thus properly qualified for domestic happiness, securely guard your heart from every fond impression. You smile at a precaution deem'd so needless to a man, you think, safely arrived to life's prudential path, beyond the reach of being scorched by giddy youth's impetuous fire; and doubly guarded by a fresh remembrance of the ills already known. Alas! from this security proceeds the greatest danger, which

bare your undefended bosom to the arrow's point! On every side beset, however weak each separate attack, 'tis wisdom's part to keep a steady watch, lest the united strength of feeble enemies, too much despis'd, surprise the fortress. You are now fixing your habitation where the utmost caution will be constantly necessary; the busy disposition of the meddling tribe of female match-makers, unwearied by repeated successful attempts, are indefatigable in their labours, and will be forever proposing some new scheme, and representing advantages in each, which never existed but in their own imagination, who are in fact generally incapable of forming any judgment of what is really advantageous, not having penetra-
tion

tion enough to go deeper than a superficial view. Yet have I already observed you to be a little influenced by their persuasion; what then may be expected from constant opportunities, continually improved? Forgive me, but indeed you are in some things too easily impressed, too apt to imbibe an opinion without giving yourself time to examine it sufficiently; no man judges better when you stay to think, but none more likely to act precipitantly; in things of lesser moment it may be excusable, but here let *reason* rule; give her full power to weigh each circumstance, to look beyond the present moment, and be by *her* determined to a choice that she forever will approve; unbiaſſed by paſſion, she will immediately say, that

you can live more agreeably, more genteelly, in your present situation, upon the annual expence of two hundred pounds, than it will be possible for you to do upon five, when married, merely on account of the proper figure then absolutely necessary with regard to your profession, exclusive of the farther consideration of an encreasing family. Ask then yourself, what fortune a wife must bring not to prove a real injury to your circumstances, and set that down as a point never to be varied from, never at least 'till an encrease of your own fortune renders it not so material a point. Having found a person possessed of this indispensable requisite to happiness, indulge no distant thought of the matrimonial union, which is
always

always some bias upon the judgment, 'till you have most carefully examined her disposition, by the methods formerly mentioned, should that be defective, fortune, however large, would prove a poor recompence for bartered peace; but if she stands the test of a minute enquiry, then, nor 'till then, give *love* admittance; a welcome guest when thus secure that Hymen's torch will blaze with undiminish'd lustre. Remember this little monarch of the heart is sure of conquest if encounter'd, and never yet was vanquish'd but by flight. Trust not to a supposed prudence that will certainly fail you when it's aid becomes most needful: Indulge not a growing approbation, which frequent interviews may form, 'till reason has, in

every light, justly authoris'd this first step to passion. You are past the foolish age of catching sudden fire 'tis true, but rest not too secure in this, one spark imbibed may long unfelt remain, 'till by accumulated strength it bursts into a blaze and conquers every fruitless opposition. 'Tis this I dread; once prepossessed, the Judgment is no longer clear, enquiries then are vain, a dazzling ray confuses every object, and we see through that mistaken light our wishes spread.—Do not thus deceive yourself.—See, and in time avoid the danger, which, perhaps, may shortly be impossible. May heaven avert my fears! and make you truly happy.

Excuse

Excuse this long epistle, which proceeds from the most tender friendship; on this subject I have seldom an opportunity of speaking to you; but exclusive of that reason, should have chosen to commit my sentiments on it to paper, in hopes that they may dwell longer on your memory. Adieu! Read my letter with the attention due to the tender anxiety, and the kind intention of an affectionate friend.

LETTER II.

To Mrs. G——s.

THE impatience you express to hear again from me, my dear madam, would not have suffered any thing

thing less than a business of essential consequence to make me defer writing to you for two posts; but when I tell you that my time, since the receipt of your last, has been wholly taken up in the reconciling a misunderstanding between Mr. B—— and his Lady, which was on the point of occasioning a separation between them, I know you will approve of my devoting every moment to so good an office.

What, say you, could have produced such a serious quarrel between two persons so lately united, and so fond of each other? An incident, as trifling in it self, as it was serious in it's effects. The meeting Lady Anne— at the House of Sir T. S——s. This visit

visit was not very agreeable to Mrs. B——, who had consented to pass a few weeks there at the request of her husband. The sight of a lady he had once admired raised a thousand unjust apprehensions in her breast; she instantly concluded the meeting had been concerted, conceal'd her sentiments, and determin'd to watch them: A few incidents, merely accidental, confirming her suspicions, she resolved in return to give her husband all the pain she now felt the passion of jealousy was capable of inspiring. My Lord F—— seemed a proper person for the purpose; she immediately grew so particular with him as to give Mr. B—— the utmost uneasiness; in vain were all his remonstrances, she enjoy'd his vexation, and carried on the

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appearance of an intrigue so far, that he seriously resolved on a separation from a wife, who no longer appeared worthy of his sincere attachment.—

This was beyond her expectations; she still loved her husband tenderly; never had any intention of really injuring him; the thought of a final separation was insupportable; and all her resentment gave way in a moment to that affection, which had only been suspended by it; yet pride would not submit to those acknowledgments which only could produce a reconciliation, as she believed *him* to be the aggressor. In the height of distress she wrote me this account, and begg'd my assistance: I set out immediately, —took the first opportunity of talking the matter over with Mr. B.—, who
heard

heard with astonishment the suspicion entertain'd of Lady Anne —, and convinced me beyond a doubt that it was entirely without foundation. Thus from a mistake, which a plain question might in a moment have rectified, an almost irreconcilable dissention had arose; nor do I believe the matter would ever have been amicably adjusted, had not a discovery that Lady Anne had been privately married to Sir William — effectually convinced Mrs. B—— of the injustice of her suspicions; she was griev'd beyond expression at the thought of having, in consequence of a false opinion, given the strongest appearances of an intrigue with my Lord F——, merely to raise a painful suspicion in her husband's breast, without considering
how

how much her own character suffered at the same time. Such a stain on his wife's reputation wounded Mr. B—— in the tenderest part, his pride was severely hurt, and notwithstanding his belief of her innocence, he thought his honour injured by the appearance of her infidelity.

The matter is at last however happily accommodated; her just sense of the past error, and generous concern for having given, by that, the sharpest misery to a man for whom her heart really feels all the esteem and affection that his good qualities, and tender attachment to her, so justly deserve, have produced a voluntary resolution to quit all those diversions he has no taste for; and conform her

own

own inclination to his love of retirement; in consequence of which, they are now gone, at her request, to reside wholly in the country. This will be as advantageous to herself, as it is agreeable to him; she is far from being weak, has an excellent natural capacity, capable of great improvements; these have been entirely neglected; a polite behaviour, with a taste for dress and gaiety are all she has hitherto learnt. Her mind is a rich soil, which for want of cultivation is over-run with weeds, that not having yet taken any deep root, will by the care of so good a husbandman, be entirely eradicated, and their place supply'd by useful and ornamental plants. I so well know the care and attention, that will, with pleasure, be given to this office,

fice, that I make no doubt of seeing her, in a few years, excel as much in understanding, as she now does in beauty.

Mr. B—— is so highly delighted with this prospect, that not the least disagreeable trace remains of the accident by which it was produced, nor has any thing through life ever afforded him a happiness equal to what he now enjoys from this fortunate change in his wife's disposition, and the pleasing hopes he has built upon it.

It may in general be remarked, I believe, that the first material dissension between married people, who really esteem and love each other, thus arises from one side mistaking the

the motive of the other's conduct in some particular instance; and, on that mistake, acting extremely wrong by way of retaliating a supposed injury; often has this error been carried to an irreparable length, and given a mortal wound to the peace of each; this proceeds from the want of that perfect mutual openness which ought to subsist in the matrimonial union.

Marriage can never be a happy state without an unreserved communication of all the sentiments of the heart. Two persons, whose interests are so inseparably connected, should have, in effect, but one mind. I do not mean by this to infer an impossibility, that their opinions should be always exactly the same; but that

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their real thoughts on every subject should be spoken as freely as they rise ; and that all debates, in matters where they happen to think differently, should be only such as every prudent man must have with himself, previous to any weighty determination; the arguments on both sides of the question impartially stated, and considered with that coolness, temper, and attention, necessary to the forming proper resolutions ; by this means the strongest reasons would unavoidably prevail, and consequently but one opinion remain to direct their mutual conduct with perfect harmony.

It may be objected that there are many people who never reason on any subject, and are govern'd wholly by
caprice

caprice and whim ; this charge perhaps may fall heaviest on the ladies ; but the folly of weak minds can never surely be urged as an argument against the prudent conduct of the sensible part of mankind, who can only here be meant ; amongst *these* was this method constantly pursued, great would be the encrease of happiness ; and the separation, or disagreement of persons once united by this social band, become as much a novelty as their perfect unanimity is at present.

Where the want of this open communication of every sentiment of the heart has produced doubts, or suspicions, nothing can be more ill-judged than an alteration of behaviour in con-

sequence of mere supposition of any kind ; had Mrs. B— consider'd that the giving the appearance of an intrigue was to all intents and purposes the same with regard to her husband, family, and her character in the world, as the real commencement of a criminal amour ; far from resting satisfied with the consciousness of unbroken fidelity, she would have trembled at the thought of fixing an indelible blot on her own reputation. Often has a hasty step of this kind, in the early part of life, wither'd every blooming hope of conjugal felicity, produced unalterable dissention, and entail'd disgrace upon an innocent family.

Happy

Happy is it for my young friend, that she has fortunately escaped this fatal consequence of her imprudence ; and still more happy, that the just sensibility of her error has produced so laudable a resolution ; in which I know you will equally rejoice with me.

This subject has so totally occupied my thoughts, that it has carried me beyond my intention ; and I have not time to commence any other to night, but will by the next post resume that of your most friendly enquiry.

Adieu, my dear madam ; let your opinion ever do justice to the unalterable affection of

Your friend, &c.

L E T T E R III.

To the same.

IN pursuance of my promise, my dear friend, I seize the first moment of this day to gratify your impatience, by a continuation of the subject, which has been accidentally interrupted.

The anecdote of the Arcadian scene, which, in answer to your question, was given out of time has carried us on some years too far, and we must go back to where we left off in the preceding letter ; for tho' I do not intend to write an exact and circumstantial

stantial history of every trifling occurrence, yet to avoid confusion, it will be necessary to preserve some sort of regularity in point of time.

Mrs. M——, as I have already said, was far from leading a recluse life ; she lived much in the world, and thought it more for her daughter's advantage to be always under her own eye, than left at home in a nursery ; for this reason, took her into all company, but was never so much engaged by any as not to attend to her every word, and almost every look ; and devoted her utmost care to the rectifying the least appearance of any improper tendency. When alone, she taught her to form some judgment of characters, at an age in which others

hardly knew what was meant by the term; pointed out all that was worthy of imitation, made her observe the errors which ought to be avoided, and represented any in her own conduct in so tender, and affectionate a manner, that her daughter always regarded her as an indulgent friend, to whom she spoke her sentiments with the most unreserved freedom, and to whose opinion she was ever ready to submit her own.

There was amongst the number of her admirers, when she was scarcely sixteen, a young gentleman, who, entering thoroughly into the peculiarity of her disposition, took the most likely method to engage her affections by professing the highest esteem for her virtues,

virtues, and the most disinterested friendship in consequence of it; he sought all opportunities of conversing with her, but always chose subjects of conversation that would have been equally proper to a male friend, without the least mixture of love, gallantry, or compliments to her person: A behaviour so exactly adapted to her own favourite system, could not fail of attaching her strongly to him, especially as his understanding and accomplishments were of a kind, that would sufficiently justify such an attachment.

Mrs. M——, the constant confidant of her most secret thoughts, was far from finding fault with her sensibility of his merit; but, as he was a
younger

younger brother, and had little other dependence than a commission in the army, thought it necessary to represent the impropriety of contracting any engagement with him. To this my young friend replied, that she had never entertained the most distant thought of marriage, was too happy in her present situation to venture the hazard of exchanging it, and had no other intention than the continuing such a friendly correspondence as might properly subsist with a brother.

A mother, who perfectly knew her disposition, and enter'd thoroughly into her uncommon turn, (which in reality she was not displeased with, it being very similar to her own) was entirely satisfied by this answer with
 regard

regard to herself, but thought it necessary to caution the young gentleman, in time, against indulging a growing affection, that might be productive of unhappiness to himself, by giving him to understand, that his visits would not be receiv'd as a suitor, tho' they were very acceptable as an acquaintance. This was perfectly agreeable to my friend's inclination, whose regard for him was too sincere not to feel most painfully any apprehension of his entertaining hopes, that would entail on himself the mortification of a disappointment.

The good lady took the first opportunity of pursuing her intention; when, contrary to her expectation, he beg'd leave to continue his visits upon

on those terms, which might be permitted ; and gave her the most solemn assurance, that he would never attempt to lead a person so dear to him into an engagement that, in his present circumstances, must be so disadvantageous to her.

You will probably think it would have been more prudent in Mrs. M—— to have broke off at once all correspondence between two young persons, whom she knew had so tender a regard for each other, than to have permitted the continuance of a friendly intimacy that, according to the opinion of the world, founded on general experience, must be liable to censure : In her defence may be urged the perfect knowledge of, and certain
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dependence on her daughter's natural disposition, which entirely removed every fear concerning her, and that being upon a foot of friendship and confidence with both, she was always of their party, and might safely depend on her own penetration to discover if the attachment, on either side, encreased to a degree that could be productive of unhappiness or misconduct ; nothing less than such an apparent probability would have been thought by her a sufficient reason for breaking off an acquaintance or friendship, which, as such merely, she was far from disapproving ; satisfied that her constant presence ought to be a security against every ill-natured reflection, she had no kind of apprehension about the matter.

Sensible

Sensible and clever as this good lady was, and sincerely as I venerate her memory, in this single instance I must dissent from her opinion, being convinced that public reports, though not founded on truth, are of too much consequence to be treated with indifference: But human judgment at best is fallible; and this, I really believe, to be the only point wherein hers erred: Perhaps that appears to me now in a stronger light than it would ever have done, had she lived some years longer to regulate my friend's conduct, who has since suffer'd much by acting in consequence of this early imbibed opinion, before her judgment was arrived at maturity to direct where it might with safety be followed: Had this deficiency been supplied by a mother's

ther's experience and attentive care, nothing might probably have ever happen'd to give rise to this reflection.

——But to proceed.——For some months this intimacy subsisted, with all the appearance of the most perfect happiness; they were inseparable companions; and it was generally believed they were on the point of being united by a marriage. This opinion Mrs. M—— endeavour'd to refute by a contrary declaration, which gain'd no credit, while her daughter, with perfect indifference, saw her lovers every day desist from their addresses, on a supposition of her engagement; and having then no intention to marry, thought herself perfectly happy in the acquisition

of

of that sort of friend her heart had been always set upon the hope of obtaining ; every part of the young gentleman's behaviour to her authorised this opinion ; at length, however, he grew unusually pensive ; Mrs. M——, whose observation no circumstance could escape, question'd him about it ; to which he replied, that in spite of all his endeavours he now felt the utter impossibility of longer maintaining the appearance of a cool friendship for her daughter ; and ask'd whether, in case an access of fortune should render him a more suitable match, he might not be permitted to make his addresses as a lover. The good lady answer'd, there would be then no objection on her part, but he would probably find much difficulty

to obtain her daughter's consent to become the wife of a man for whom, as a friend, she had made no scruple to confess a sincere regard.

This obstacle he thought might be surmounted by time and importunity; and had resolved to remove the other, or perish in the attempt, by endeavouring to signalize himself in a manner, that could not fail of procuring such an encrease of rank in the army as would be sufficient to answer the purpose. The war, which had sometime broke out, favour'd this intention; and the regiment to which he belong'd being order'd for the next embarkation, gave a reasonable hope of putting it soon in practice.

His perfect knowledge of my friend's heart, and thorough acquaintance with her real sentiments, made him very desirous of concealing from her a design he knew she would on every account disapprove; he therefore begg'd, and obtain'd of her mother a promise of secrecy, which was faithfully kept; this knowledge also secured him from any apprehension that her hand would be dispos'd of to another during his absence.

When he departed for the regiment, they mutually exchanged vows of eternal friendship, and agreed on a constant epistolary correspondence.

This

This separation was, I believe, to the full as painful as that of lovers. With the utmost impatience she every day expected to hear from him, but was equally astonish'd and griev'd at the disappointment of that expectation. After some weeks had thus elapsed in total silence, she desired leave to write to him for an eclaircissement of so unaccountable a behaviour; but uncertain where to direct, propos'd doing it under a feign'd name in a periodical paper, and in a stile that would be understood only by himself. Mrs M——, who guess'd the reason of his silence, did not absolutely oppose her intention, but willing to spare him a needless pain, found means to delay it 'till she heard he was gone abroad, and consequently

there would be little probability of his seeing the letter.

This poetical expostulation I have no copy of, nor do I recollect the month in which it was printed, therefore cannot refer you to it, but as I know you will desire to see the contents, shall try to write them from memory; 'twill serve to give a just idea of her sentiments at that time, but if you expect any thing extraordinary, you will be disappointed; 'tis well enough for a girl of sixteen, which is all that can be said of it.

To Marcus.

Alas, how little of ourselves we know!
How small a part perform of what we owe!

We

We promise friendship, and perhaps intend,
But soon forget the promise and the friend.

Can you, whom late I thought by far the best
Of human race, prove worthless as the rest?
Say, why did you eternal friendship swear,
Or why invoke the gracious gods to hear
Those vows you meant to break——Deceiv'd
by you,

I must conclude that men are never true;
Their solemn falshoods unregarded hear,
And all connexion with the sex forswear.
Why are they given, ye gods, superior sense!
Or why endow'd with soft'ning eloquence!
The pow'rs you give they use but to betray,
While reason's scepter yeilds to passions sway.

But you, oh! Marcus, once I thought had been
By much above the common race of men;
Unskill'd in arts, unmeaning to deceive,
I thought you were, and did your vows believe;
Nor were those vows to love, but friendship
made;

Think on your promise, and yourself upbraid.
What god-like virtues in your bosom meet!
You want but constancy to be compleat:

A mind so noble, and a form so fair,
Pity one thought deform'd should harbour there.

Reflect a moment, ask your conscious breast
By whom these lines were wrote, to whom address'd,
And 'twill inform you, for you can't but see
They were to you design'd, and wrote by me.

CONSTANTIA.

It was near three months after their
separation before my young friend
obtain'd her mother's permission to
publish this epistle. As she could not
doubt either of his seeing it, or dis-
covering the author, she entertain'd
an almost certain expectation of re-
ceiving an answer, and flatter'd
herself with the hope of his be-
ing able to remove those sus-
picions of insincerity, which so

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unaccountable a silence had given rise to. The indulgence of this expectation served only to redouble the mortification of disappointment, when every periodical paper was examin'd without affording the answer so ardently desired. A few months put a period to all hopes of this kind, but as many years removed not the painful impresson it left on her mind.

Adieu, my dear friend, I cannot add more to night, than that I am, with unalterable esteem ever most affectionately.

Yours, &c.

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LETTER IV.

To Miss Louisa —

A Mind like your's, my dear Louisa, form'd to enjoy the happiness of others, will be delighted with the recital of an event that has just happen'd in my neighbourhood, and is at present the general subject of conversation amongst us, I cannot therefore defer giving you the pleasure you will receive from the knowledge of this new instance of my worthy friend Mrs. M——'s uncommon benevolence, who, in one of her evening walks, attended only by a servant, heard at some distance in the coppice

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adjoining to her garden, the sound of plaintive voices, that seemed expressive of extreme distress. She hastened, through a winding path, nearer to the place from whence it came, and discover'd, by the opening of the branches, a beautiful girl, who appear'd to be about the age of eighteen, bathed in tears, her head reclined on the breast of a youth, in whose amiable countenance was pictured the most poignant anguish. From their conversation she soon learnt, that by some unexpected misfortune, they were not only on the point of being separated forever, but the unhappy girl compell'd to give her hand to a man she hated, on the day that had been appointed to bestow it on *him* she loved; These peculiar circumstances

stances seem'd to heighten the distress of parting; in faltering accents she lamented the impossibility of discharging her duty to the best of parents, but by this sacrifice of her own happiness: with an unreserv'd acknowledgment of the tenderest affection, was join'd a declar'd resolution to break off all acquaintance with *him*, from the moment she became the wife of another; and this on a principle of virtue that shrunk with horror from the bare appearance of vice.

The youth saw not the necessity of so painful a determination, and, with all the eloquence he was master of, labour'd to mitigate the cruel sentence; but was at last overcome by the force of her arguments urged with

with amazing firmness, and promised to quit the country immediately after her marriage, to reside with an uncle about fifty miles distant. A thousand innocent and mutual endearments concluded the parting scene, and they each took a different path out of the wood.

Mrs. M——, astonish'd at a generosity of sentiment so unusual amongst persons in the station these appear'd to be, order'd her servant to follow the girl to find out her name and place of abode, who soon learnt that she was the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, her name then, Letitia Willis, which was to be chang'd in a few days by a marriage with Thomas Rich, son to a farmer that was Mrs. M——'s tenant.

The

The good lady, already interested in the behalf of the distress'd Lovers, rejoiced at the last circumstance, which promis'd an opportunity of being serviceable to them; she went the next morning to see the girl; found her busied in the offices of the dairy, and was surpris'd at the uncommon neatness, not only of her person, but of every thing in the house, of which Letitia was the chief manager, her mother having been long infirm. She soon found a pretence to take her aside, and enquir'd into the cause of the melancholy that over-spread her countenance, with the kindest offer of assistance. Oh! madam, answer'd the girl, I know your goodness, but death only can relieve my misfortune,

I must part forever from a young man I love dearer than my life, and indeed he deserves it, for every body speaks well of him; and am forced to marry one that is cross, proud, ill-natur'd, and has nobody's good word, or—see my father ruin'd!—Here grief for a while suppress'd her voice that was drown'd in a copious flow of tears; when sufficiently recover'd to resume the subject, she complied with the good lady's request, by informing her of all the circumstances of her unfortunate situation; more out of gratitude for the tender concern express'd, than from any hope of finding redress to those evils she thought irremediable.

Not

Not to exceed the compass of a letter, I must pass over many interesting particulars of this little history, and shall only tell you, that this young couple had been intended for each other from their infancy; the youth was the only son of a near relation to the girl's mother (whose name was Smith) he dying when the boy was but eight years old, left him to the care of her father, with an injunction to complete the marriage at a proper time, who then took the lad home to his own house, where growing up with his daughter, they became mutually fond of each other, and the next week had been appointed for the celebration of their nuptials; when an unexpected misfortune put a final period to all their hopes of happiness.

About

About two years ago her father, moved by the distress of an old acquaintance, was bound for the payment of three hundred pounds to farmer Rich; this acquaintance died soon after insolvent; the debt of consequence came upon the surety; but the two farmers having always lived upon the most amicable terms, Willis was under no apprehensions from such a creditor, who voluntarily promised to give him his own time for the payment.

It happened that young Rich had long been an unsuccessful suitor to Letitia; and having a much larger fortune than his rival, had often, by the most advantageous offers, in vain endeavour'd to supplant him. When
the

the day was fixed for her marriage, and their companions invited to the ceremony, unable to bear the thought of losing his mistress, he persuaded *his* father to try if *her's* could not be prevail'd with to set aside the intended marriage in favour of himself. Willis embarrass'd by the unexpected proposal, and afraid of incensing his creditor by a positive refusal, referr'd him to his daughter; who, unmoved by all that could work upon female vanity, rejected his offers in so resolute a manner, as to convince the old man of the impossibility of changing her affections, which he represented in the strongest terms to his son, and urged every argument to make him relinquish the hope of possessing the person of a girl, whose heart was unalterably

alterably pre-engaged.—His endeavours were fruitless ; the young man, violent in his passion, swore not to out-live the disappointment of his hopes, and, by this means, frightened his father into an ungenerous resolution to force her, if possible, to a compliance, by offering to give up the bond to Willis if she married his son, but to insist on the payment before she became the wife of another. This threw the whole family into the utmost distress.—To pay the debt was not in their power ; the father therefore must go to a jail, —or the daughter comply.—The good old man preferred the first.—The daughter's filial affection and duty prevail'd over every other consideration, and she resolved rather to sacrifice herself, than see her

father condemn'd to the miseries of a prison ;—this resolution produced the parting scene already related.

Now, madam, said the girl, having finish'd her story, what redress can I find ?—My intended husband has but one hundred pounds in the world, and all my father's stock would scarce make up the remainder ; or suppose it would, what could we do starving together.—I am forced therefore to comply, and have no relief.

Mrs. M—— heard her story with the compassion it must naturally inspire.—Compose yourself, my dear girl said she, we may yet find a way to make you as happy as you deserve. Then return'd with her to the house,

talk'd

talk'd the matter over with the old people, who were distress'd beyond measure at the separation of the lovers, join'd to the apprehension of the miserable life their daughter would have with a man she could never endure, and who in reality had not one good quality to recommend him: From them she heard the whole story, with many additional distressing circumstances. A thousand interesting anecdotes, in this little history, must be deferr'd 'till we meet: Suffice it at present only to say, that Mrs. M—— left them with an assurance that she would take the matter upon herself, and comforted them with the expectation that all things would soon be settled to their satisfaction.

Now, my dear Louisa, follow this worthy woman through the sequel; hear her, with the utmost propriety, representing to Rich the inhumanity of making use of the power in his hands to distress a neighbour, and ruin the peace of his family; and enjoining him, on pain of being dismissed from the farm, to restrain his son from any future attempt to prevent the marriage, or disturb the quiet of the young couple. See her discharge the debt, and present the cancell'd bond to young Smith, with orders to complete his happiness by the possession of his intended bride, and the day after their marriage to bring his wife to her. Figure to yourself the countenance of the amiable youth, more expressive than language, of a heart so

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overwhelm'd with joy and gratitude, as to leave him scarce the power of thanking his benefactress.

The happy couple were join'd, all the village rejoiced in their good fortune, and the disappointment of young Rich, who was universally dislik'd. The father and mother came with them to return their united acknowledgments to this excellent lady. She told them, that the good were always the care of heaven; 'twas there alone their gratitude was due, she only having been made the instrument to reward a daughter's filial piety; and to complete their felicity, put them immediately into a small farm of her own at an easy rent.

In vain should I attempt to describe the pleasure that was on this occasion either given or received; you will conceive much better than I could paint it, and the feelings of your own heart will convince you, that the satisfaction of the person who conferr'd the benefit, exceeded that of those who received it; as in her breast was accumulated the separate joy of every individual, whose misery she had exchang'd for almost perfect happiness. Their thanks were return'd with all the warmth that rustic language could express; while their looks bespoke a gratitude that no words can describe.

The diffusive happiness spread thro' the neighbouring villages, and universal

versal seemed the joy, while the echoing hills resounded with *her praise*, whose bounty had bestow'd the blessing.

Your generous bosom, my dear Louisa, will partake the raptures of this deserving family, and know too well by experience the delightful sensations resulting from benevolent actions, not to form a judgment of those produced by this sight in the breast of Mrs. M——. This good lady, with not more than six hundred pounds a year, has every thing elegantly neat about her, and is continually doing acts of charity and benevolence that would be thought great in a person possess'd of as many thousands; the children of the neighbouring poor are taught to

read, write, &c. at her expence, and instructed in their duty by the curate of the parish, to whom she gives a salary of twenty pounds a year for this purpose. The sick are supplied with all their necessities require, and supported, 'till they are capable of re-commencing their work. Innumerable instances could I relate of this lady's bounty, but none more beneficial to society than that of lending one, two and sometimes three hundred pounds, without interest, to industrious young persons, who, without such assistance, could never have been able to set forwards in business. I dare say there are not less than twenty tradesmen, now in flourishing circumstances, who owe their rise to these loans, and I have heard her say she never lost but
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one sum so lent, all the rest having thankfully repaid her when able.—

How god-like are those dispositions that thus employ the goods of fortune in diffusing happiness wide as their influence can extend ; and how much superior must be the enjoyment resulting from acts of this nature, to that which all the pomp of dress, equipage, and public shew, can afford.

Few, very few, my dear girl, are the instances of this kind.—How much more happy would the world be, if such an example was followed by those whose larger fortunes might enable them to be much more extensively useful to society ! And how inexcusably culpable are they, who either waste in idle extravagancy, or hoard

hoard in rusty coffers, what, properly applied, might make thousands happy.

Not having time to write to you the last post, I did not send the few pages of the history, which were then translated, shall hereafter, as you desire, transmit the sheets as they are finish'd, tho' unaccompanied by a letter; but I believe that will seldom happen; because, however unnecessary may be the repetition of a truth you are already convinced of, I am pleased with embracing every opportunity of subscribing myself

Your most faithful,

and affectionate friend, &c.

The

The ADVENTURES of ALPHONSO,
continued.

I Have been pleased with my charge, because you have been ever so attentive to my admonitions, that, 'till this last severest trial of your constancy, I have never found it necessary to call in the assistance of a foreign aid.—This requires an explanation, as you cannot at present comprehend my meaning ; but you must have patience while I proceed regularly in the information I am permitted to give you ; by which means you will be acquainted with those secret springs, that influence the conduct of mankind, but are beyond the reach of human penetration.

tion. For this singular indulgence you are indebted to the peculiar favour of that Supreme Being from whom we both derive our existence; not owing to any capricious partiality, inconsistent with the perfection of his nature, but as a reward to the uncommon integrity of your own heart. I speak, Alphonso, from undeniable certainty, having been intimately conscious of your every thought.

The order of beings to which I belong are permitted, under certain limitations, to indulge their benevolent affections in the service and assistance of the human race, so far only as to influence their minds, without infringing their agency. As soon as an infant is born into your world, one of

us obtain leave to be his guardian, and from that moment, to the hour of his dissolution, we never abandon him, unless he becomes incorrigibly deprav'd, and by continually rejecting our admonitions, renders it impossible for us to be any farther serviceable; in that case we resign our charge, and receive permission to choose another; but wretched is the man who is thus given up, for the moment we leave him, one of those malevolent beings, who delight in the destruction of mankind, becomes his constant attendant.

This race of miscreants, fallen themselves from a state of purity, are unwearied in their fruitless endeavour totally to subvert the order of the universe,

verse, by introducing vice, confusion, and rebellion, to the utmost extent of their ability. In the rank of being they were originally our equals, nor have we now any power over them, but what arises from the superiority of virtue, which keeps them at so awful a distance, that not the most intrepid of them will dare approach the man, who, by yielding to our influence, is protected from their malice; yet are they ever throwing allurements in his way, and incessantly watching an opportunity to seduce him. We are never unmindful of their attempts, or wanting in vigilance to counteract their designs.

I see, continu'd he looking steadfastly on me, the conclusions you
have

have drawn from this relation; but you are mistaken in supposing we exert any compulsive power over the will of man; the freedom of his actions is unrestrain'd even by the Deity; our office extends no farther than to collect and impress on his mind, those motives that ought to determine his choice, and he is then at full liberty, either to receive or reject our influence.

You would now ask, why all men do not equally profit from that assistance we offer to each in an equal degree? and from whence proceeds that apparent propensity to ill in the nature of some, which is discoverable even from the earliest dawn of reason, and reigns thro' every stage

stage of future life, to render them in a manner incapable of receiving any virtuous impressions, and averse to every wise and prudent admonition? This question I am not permitted to answer you, and the reason is, that it is impossible to give an intelligible and satisfactory answer to such an enquiry, without a previous information with regard to the original design in the creation of man, and explaining the primary cause of so strange a compound of spirit and matter in the same being: Two things in their nature so opposite, so inconsistent with each other, that nothing less than the Almighty Mind could have form'd an idea of such a possible union.

When

When the creative word spoke your planet into being, the design of it's formation was to us imparted ; and notwithstanding the very imperfect conception, which even the highest of the celestial inhabitants could form of the stupendous plan, that imperfect knowledge afforded sufficient matter to raise our astonishment at the amazing power, and encrease our love and adoration of the inconceivable benevolence of the Supreme Existence, which was here unexpectedly display'd in so extraordinary a manner, that never had been equall'd ; and, as we yet believe, never can be exceeded.—But this cannot be brought to the level of your present comprehension, nor indeed, whilst your immortal part is so intimately connected

with matter, would such a knowledge, could it be communicated, be serviceable to you; but, on the contrary, might be productive of many pernicious consequences.

Rest satisfied, therefore, with the assurance I give you that, whatever apparent difference there may be in the dispositions of mankind, all feel at first with equal force the impressions we make on their minds; all are equally capable of attending to, and obeying our admonitions, and all will finally acknowledge that not the power but the will alone was wanting to obey, and own, beyond the grave, the justice of the irrevocable doom.

—What fits your knowledge I am permitted to impart to you, receive
with

with gratitude the peculiar favour; suspend every idle curiosity, and let it be sufficient that you will no longer remain ignorant of any thing, that it can be either useful or convenient for you to know.

As it would be very difficult, continued he, to describe, and still more so to make you comprehend any description of the manner in which we discharge our friendly offices to mankind, of that I am to give you ocular demonstration; but you are not now capable of receiving it, we must wait yet a little, and during that time I shall recall to your remembrance some incidents of your past life, wherein you will be sensible of

the advantages my influence has been to you.

When, after the death of your father, many schemes for improving the small pittance his extravagance had left you were proposed, being young, and unexperienced in affairs of this kind, a deference for your uncle's judgment led you to fix on that which had the sanction of his approbation; in pursuance of this you were to have embark'd in a few days, with all your effects, on board a Dutch vessel which then lay in the harbour, and the next day was fix'd for drawing up an agreement between you and the captain of it. I foresaw what must have been the fatal effects of
such

such a voyage, and resolved, if possible, to prevent it.

Recall to your imagination the anxiety and doubt wherein you pass'd the night after having acquiesced in your uncle's determination, and the uneasiness you felt at the thought of signing the proposed agreement on the ensuing day ; yet not being able to account for your own aversion to a plan, which you could not make any solid objection to the prudential part of, you determin'd to conquer what appear'd to be only a whimsical dislike, and set out in the morning with a resolution to fulfil the engagement. I redoubled my efforts, but, in proportion to the strength of my impression, you ex-

erted the force of your resolution to suppress it, on a mistaken opinion which it exceeded my permission to rectify ; I began to despair of success, and was on the point of calling a foreign aid ; when at that instant, Don Antonio's guardian power summon'd my assistance.

Our method of communication is instantaneous ; we see, in a moment, the utility of each others designs, and at once comprehend all the means of effecting them : I presented Antonio to your imagination, and excited an inclination to consult his opinion on your present anxiety ; you went directly to his house, and found him not a little discompos'd by the ingratitude of a young man, on whom

he

he had confer'd a long series of unmerited favours:——The particulars of this story, which has never reach'd your knowledge, I will relate to you as a proof of the advantages which result to mankind from such an attention to the impressions we make on their minds, as may lead them to a willing compliance with our admonitions; and of those irreparable evils which, on the contrary, must accrue to themselves from obliging us, by a constant rejection of our offer'd service, to leave them to the direction of those malevolent beings, who delight in their destruction.

About twenty years before the period I am speaking of, an intimate friend of Don Antonio's, named Or-

lando, was, by a succession of unavoidable misfortunes, from the most affluent circumstances reduced to the lowest degree of indigence, and want. He conceal'd his distresses to the last moment, when his rapacious creditors seized on all his effects ; and, not satisfied with that, secured his person for those debts which it was not in his power to discharge. Don Antonio was at this time gone to reside for a few months at Cadiz ; but, having long suspected that Orlando's affairs were in a declining situation, though he could never draw the confession from him, had taken the necessary precaution to have the earliest intelligence convey'd to him if any sudden distress should, in the mean time, happen to his friend. The news of his misfortune

tune was no sooner brought, than he flew to his assistance, paid all the debts that Orlando's effects were insufficient to discharge, and brought him, with his son Francisco, about nine years of age, and an infant daughter, to his house at Cadiz. Here Antonio endeavour'd, by every possible method, to dissipate the grief of his unhappy friend, whose grateful heart, pain'd with the sense of an obligation that it could never be in his power to repay, and oppress'd with sorrow for the recent loss of a wife he had most tenderly loved, sunk under the weight of anguish, and gave way to an imbecility of mind, that in a few months put a period to his life; his latest breath recommended the helpless orphans, he was on the point of leaving,

leaving, to the care of Antonio, who, after paying the last offices of friendship to the deceased father, adopted the children, educated them as his own, and when the girl became marriageable, gave her a fortune suitable to her birth, and married her to a wealthy merchant, with whom she now lives happily.

The young Francisco had masters of every kind provided for him; he had a quick and lively capacity, and so universal a genius that he made an equal and amazing progress in every branch of science. Having finish'd his studies at the age of eighteen, Antonio made him clerk to himself; by a close application to the business of his office, he soon became so expert in it that his master committed the whole

whole management of his affairs to him, and allow'd him an unusual salary for transacting them.

Had Francisco been of a virtuous and grateful disposition, he would have thought himself inexpressibly happy in the favour of so excellent a patron; but alas! his heart was void of every noble and generous sentiment, avarice, cunning, and ingratitude, were it's constant inhabitants; hitherto these had been artfully conceal'd, by the impenetrable mask of an invariable hypocrisy, but as soon as he believ'd himself become too necessary to his benefactor to run any risk by removing the veil, he no longer kept any guard over his actions, and gave a loose to the indulgence of every vicious inclination.

L E T-

LETTER V.

To Mr. ———.

HAPPY as it always makes me, my dear friend, to hear of your corporeal ease and improving health, I receiv'd still more satisfaction from the account this day brought me of the evident encrease of that philosophic disposition of mind, which cannot fail of producing, when possess'd in it's utmost extent, perfect and unalterable happiness in this and every other state of existence: The variety of disagreeable incidents unavoidable in human life makes it very difficult to preserve that equability of temper, which

which is necessary to that end, yet the greater proficiency we make in it, the nearer we approach to true felicity, and I congratulate you on the great progress you have made.

The absence of those who are dear to me I always feel the most severely of all ills, excepting only their misconduct ; the latter, I hope, you will not give me reason to lament, and the former will probably never be long or often.

I believe one great part of our happiness beyond the grave will arise from the utter impossibility of being again separated from those who are dear to us ; and this opinion is founded on my having always felt the absence of
those

those I love productive of more pain than could be produced by almost any other cause ; though it is to be supported with decency, calmness, and a tolerable degree of tranquillity when known to be not only proper, but unavoidable ; yet one must be absolutely insensible as the unfeeling Eugenio to find a possibility of being truly happy in such a situation. In ballancing the account, I believe my sufferings, from an uncommon lively sensation, have been through life much more frequent than my enjoyments ; yet for the world would I not exchange with those who are incapable of feeling either in the extreme, and travel through their whole tedious journey to the grave, unconscious of, and incapable of tasting

more than the dull ease resulting from a kind of negative happiness;—unenvied state of insipidity! Be it my better lot rather to know alternately the sharpest pangs of the most poignant anguish, and the transporting pleasures of unbounded felicity, than thus to dream away the lagging hours of life in one dead calm of joyless insensibility, and perfectly alive to scarcely any thing but those corporeal sensations, which either of pain, or pleasure, are beneath the regard of a rational mind. I believe, my dear friend, you are in this of my opinion, and would not have chose to be free'd from the pain of separation, at the expence of abating, in any degree, that inexpressible pleasure with which we shall

shall, I hope, in a few days, meet each other.

The account you give of Rossano displeases me much ; such a conduct must be productive of innumerable inconveniencies, to say no worse, to himself. This instability in him proceeds not from a defective judgment that wavers in it's determinations, but from an unfortunate indolence, which renders the exertion and activity of mind, absolutely necessary to carry any plan steadily into execution, almost insupportably irksome. It would not I think be very improper to call his a neutral disposition, which inclines not either to virtue or vice with sufficient strength to animate an inva-
riable

riable pursuit of the one, but may be drawn alternately to each by adding strength to the opposition on the contrary side.

If a man of this temper happens to be virtuous, it is owing more to a happy concurrence of circumstances, than to his own resolution. Hitherto the chances have been against him, and to that, his faults may be chiefly imputed ; but if we both pass the winter together, I shall endeavour to turn the scale, and make the difficulty of giving an after account more troublesome than the opposition to a present indulgence. He now wants resolution to resist the temptations that surround him, but I hope to make the task of excusing that want

of resolution more painful, than the exertion of it can be, and by that means make no doubt of carrying the point ; he has a thousand good qualities, and 'tis worth much pains to save him from ruin.

I have been fatigued to-day by the necessity of receiving formal visits on my arrival here, which you know to me is the most disagreeable and tiresome way of wasting time, you will not therefore wonder that I should be in too stupid a humour to write any thing that will give you pleasure, excepting only the repeated assurance (excuse my vanity) that I am with the most sincere affection ever

Your's, &c.

L E T.

LETTER VI.

To Mrs. P——.

In answer to Letter VII. in the First
Volume, Page 114.

MADAM,

SO desirous am I to shew how
happy your answer to my letter
has made me, that without the
preparation which is necessary to answer
your epistles, I take up the pen,
agreeing entirely with you, that delay
with perfection is inferior to readiness
with imperfection in the offices
of friendship.

Before I proceed to the answer of your letter, I must tell you that I am highly delighted with the change of scene ; and my pleasures in retirement are inexpressible.

The mind that is fired with the study of nature, that adores wisdom when it perceives it, is in raptures with real beauty whenever it offers itself, and has a taste to discover it in rural objects, must find true enjoyment, when in the grove of nature. When the sun rises, the silver hoar whitens all the grass, and the black-bird chaunts his matin hymn, I take my morning walk ; the serenity this scene produces in my mind you may better conceive than I describe.

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The day passes tolerably well, but the evening again is delightful. The other night the scene was so fine that I found the old passion for poetry recur ; and though it is almost as absurd in me, to shew you my pieces as it was for the poets of the Dunciad to make offerings at Olympus, I must write a few lines ;

The evening blushes crimson'd all the West,
And o'er the northern sky soft fleecy clouds
More smooth than velvet, and in dye more bright
Than purple ting'd at Phœnice, waving sail'd ;
The modest moon, a world of chrystal light
With silver seas, and rocks of jet emboss'd
Through liquid æther held her even course.

Enough—I see you are tired. Horace long ago remark'd of fingers, what all the world has of poets, that it is with difficulty you persuade them

to begin, but scarcely possible to make them leave off. I will not however draw on myself the latter remark.

Your approbation of the young man gives me much pleasure, as it satisfies me that I have not been mistaken in him. It is commonly said, that we are blind to the faults of our friends, but I have long been convinced of the falsehood of that assertion ; and am certain that both their virtues and vices are magnified by the friend's eye.

I have been wishing much for your letter, which I foolishly pack'd up with some papers, that are not yet come, therefore cannot regularly answer your objections, however as my
memory

memory presents them to me, I shall attempt it.

Your first material argument in favour of innate ideas is—The great difference that may be observ'd in the dispositions of children of the same age, educated under the same parents, and in the same manner; one shall be witty, a second sagacious, and a third silly; now can any one doubt, say you, but that these were predispositions originally stamp'd on the soul. First, What do we mean by predisposition? A certain inclination that leads us to prefer one thing to another without a previous comparison of the two. On what does this inclination depend? You'll say, on a greater fear or a greater love of

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one object than another. This implies comparison, therefore it cannot be predisposition; nor can we conceive a greater desire for, or proneness to one object, without an opinion of that object's being more desirable, and consequently the effect of comparison: But allowing that there were natural aversions and fondnesses without comparison, which it is scarcely possible to conceive, on what would these depend? Not on innate ideas, but on the pleasure impress'd on the senses being particularly great; or the uneasiness remarkably strong: Now the organs of sense are corporeal, and the whole may at last depend on some subtle change in their organization. We may conceive man to be form'd of a sentient, a sensible,
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and a moving system : Let us call the first the soul, the second the nerves, and the third the muscles : Now as we know that from the different modes of union of the sensible and moving systems, the variety of temperaments or constitutions are form'd, which modes of union are not anatomically, but physically proved ; so from the different modes of union of the sentient and sensible systems the different mental dispositions may arise.

Is it possible to suppose that He who hung the worlds of the universe in so wonderful a manner that millions revolve round millions without impeding each other's motion, or that a Being who in this our planet has
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shewn such innumerable and incontestible evidences of a supreme goodness and benevolence, would create the minds of men with different degrees of ability, yet expect from all the same conduct; and offer to all the same rewards and punishments? such a conclusion must be false, as justice is as essential to the Deity as existence; for my part I believe that all minds were originally form'd with the same powers; and that, as I said before, all the diversities are owing to the same cause that occasions the continually varying stripes of tulips; varieties depending on the arrangement of matter.

So nicely is that ætherial something, called soul, or mind, interwoven with
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the body, so exceedingly subtile is this union of mind and matter, that it has been among physiologists a disputed point where the soul is particularly seated; some asserting that the head was it's sole residence, others the stomach; now if a dispute can be raised about the seat of the soul in the human body, we must acknowledge that it's connection with it is of the most subtile kind; and, consequently, that variations in the machine must vary the mode of union, and by varying the material part, occasion a difference in the senses, and by altering the senses, one class of ideas strike more particularly than an other; if one set of ideas are convey'd more readily, and impress'd more strongly than another, the memory will be
more

more particularly fraught with such ; and, if so, the association of ideas will be chiefly of that kind ; if a routine of the same class of ideas are continually circulating through the mind, the reflection of them will be of the same nature ; of course from hence flows peculiarity of disposition.

You will probably ask, Are not these changes in the organization of the senses visible to the anatomist ?—No, madam. The two greatest affections of the mind, idiotism and madness, very frequently shew no remarkable variation of the sensible parts, yet nobody will dream of asserting that these mental diseases are not the effect of corporeal changes. I think it may be proved even in that
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instance which seems most to contradict this doctrine (the madness from uneasiness) that the corporeal parts are diseased, as we particularly find the nervous system in these unfortunate persons so varied in it's sensibility, that they require double doses of medicines to act on them. But on the subject of madness, either medically or physically, much may be said, as I think little has been written well on that subject. Now if we allow, which we certainly must, that the want of judgment, as in idiotism; and the false collection of ideas, as in madness, may be the consequence of bodily diseases; we must also allow, that all the shades between sagacity and idiotism, between genius and madness, may be so likewise; he who

who denies this, might as well deny the truth of a mathematical demonstration.

The next argument you bring to support your opinion is, that we have many ideas which could not be derived from matter, as time, space, &c. now I must say with Mr. Locke, that we have no ideas of either, but what we receive from matter: First, Are not our ideas of time entirely produced from a succession of incidents? By these we measure time. What are these incidents? Certain accidents which produce certain ideas that arise from matter, and are convey'd to the soul by the organs of sense, which are themselves material. Suppose a man to have laid in a trance five days, without

out dreaming, would he have any notion of the time that had elapsed? No, for he has had no succession of ideas. There is a certain sort of madness, in which every thing that happen'd the day before the senses were lost, for many years afterwards, are by the persons imagin'd to have happen'd the day before that in which they are speaking; the memory of all preceding facts being retain'd in regular order, but, from the commencement of the disease, having lost the power of registering new ideas, they consequently have no notion of time. Again; when a person, who is capable of receiving ideas as they offer themselves, and retaining them, is travelling, or amusing himself so that every moment brings in a new set of ideas, he
thinks

thinks the time much longer than he otherwise would : This I speak from experience, as I have often remark'd that the days appear to be almost double their usual length while on a journey, and this not from being tired ; tho' weariness is likewise an illustration of this doctrine ; for every idea rivets itself, as it were, in the mind, and hangs upon it, when we wish a certain time elapsed.

Let us next examine our notions of space. We think it a vast extensive vacuity ; by which space or vacuity we imply boundaries, as we have no conception of infinity, an idea reserv'd for a future state. How many millions of millions of miles soever we conceive space to extend, still to have

an idea of it we must conceive it to be of a certain size ; and if of a certain size, it must be bounded, and the boundary must be material ; consequently, if we have any idea of space, that idea must be derived from matter, and of course these your objections to my opinion have no weight.

I should next consider your hypothesis, which is so pleasing that I would by no means object to it, if the allowing it did not endanger my own system.

Can we imagine that the Deity at present interferes with the petty œconomy of our machines ? No.—In the beginning he form'd them, and gave them laws, on the regular operation

of which, health of body, and, as we have before said, health of mind depend: Now you seem to think, that the corporeal incumbrances are intended as punishments; if then, in consequence of age or disease, a lively and vigorous mind is changed to a melancholy and insipid one, do you hold it that this was one of the better or worse fallen angels; if one of the best, why did these incumbrances fetter his mind? if one of the worst, why was he in the beginning so lively and promising? There is now no resource, but to say, the disease was from God; yet, perhaps, it was from eating or drinking too much, or some such accident: and can we suppose that the Deity is continually acting on, and regulating our bodies; such a suggestion must be false,

false, because was that the case, we could have no power over our bodies, and this implies non-agency.

Again, If the Deity was regulating our systems, why should poor little innocent babes be so punish'd as they frequently are? These are a few of many objections that may be brought. Did I not know that you, with the exertion of half your abilities, would be quite too much for me, I should have been polite, according to the common acceptance of that term, but upon my word you often put me hard to it.

Now, madam, I should attempt to bring other arguments to support my own system; I wish I had either time

or ability, or your patience to reduce the subtle and complex metaphysical ideas, thro' the road of reflection, down to simple ideas; but this would be too great a task, and at the same time conceited, as it is so well done by Mr. Locke; yet as you are not satisfied with him, I think I may venture to give you two illustrations drawn from the growth of states; and the progression of manners.

On a comparison of all those states that, in the beginning, were not favour'd with divine assistance, we find them first mere hunters, and their country a hunting field: Their passions direct their conduct: They eat, drink, and live in common: Next the weaker being abused by the stronger
enlist

enlist themselves under their banners, and little bodies of them unite, form certain laws for their conduct, and as many little states arise. These contend with each other, and partly from conquest, and partly from policy, several unite, and submitting to each other, at last form a kingdom. Obligation, not self-knowledge, acquired, not innate ideas, gradually produced in their empty minds prudence, policy, and refinement. If God had not instructed the happy inhabitants of paradise himself, they certainly would have been little better than idiots.

The other argument for acquired ideas is, the prevalence of certain turns of temper in mankind at a certain period; some attribute this to emulation,

others to imitation, but it seems entirely owing to the progression of manners.

Ideas are brought into the mind by some circumstances relative to such ideas, or that used to accompany them; thus, when we speak of fruit, it's chief quality, flavour, immediately recurs; or in the other instance, when we see a place where some remarkable incident occur'd, the remembrance of such incident returns: Now, if a vast variety of circumstances, each of which has it's train of ideas, happen at nearly the same time, somewhat of the same prevalence of sentiment, or at least of the same method of reasoning, will in all people be produced: We have two good instances of this at Athens in the
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theatrical poets; when the democracy prevailed, and Cleon exercised his unlimited power, in consequence of which every Athenian was bold and enterprising, the licentious and striking Aristophanes wrote; when Athens again became compos'd and happy, the gentle and elegant Menander graced the pen.

From Egypt I shall take another instance; their religion being much of the symbolic kind, the same method of communicating opinions prevail'd in other things; hence, in the arts and sciences, in which they are said to excel all other nations, they deliver'd no just account to future ages, wanting simple description. I have often with pleasure remark'd the gradual

improvement of the human mind, and the different kinds of study pursu'd as manners improv'd : Observe in the great empire that their geniuses were in this order :

1st, Descriptive Poets, { ORPHEUS,
LINUS.

2d, Epic Poets, { HOMER,
XENOPHANES.

3d, Natural Philosophers, { THALES,
ANAXIMANDER,
DEMOCRITUS.

4th, Moral Philosophers, { EPICTETUS,
PLATO,
SOCRATES,

5th, Mathematicians, { ARCHIMEDES,
EUCLID.

6th, Historians, { XENOPHON,
HERODOTUS, &c.

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I have omitted many that still further confirm this order, and others that deviate from it. Now observe the course of the human mind; when a language is in it's infancy, every word must have many meanings, and therefore the first grand effort of genius, must be towards poetry, which, at first, wanting contrivance, must be the bare descriptive, not epic; hence first Linus, Orpheus, &c. As natural sagacity encreases with the stock of facts, contrivance, and a history of human life, dwelling particularly on those actions which make the greatest figure in recital, with the assistance of emphatic language, must be soon expected; for this nothing more was necessary than fine taste, natural judgment, and chaste observation; all these

these qualities joining in Homer, from the progression of manners, this was the period for the Iliad, &c.

As the poet always selects those ideas which are most universal, and at the same time most striking, and wanders round them to discover a side where he may add a scientific epithet, or shew that he dives more intimately into the subject than others: As the poet is proud of forsaking his natural description, and introducing a philosophic rhapsody, a subtle query, or an ingenious guess; philosophy naturally follows poetry, and of all philosophy, first the philosophy of nature; hence Democritus, Thales, and Anaximander next appeared.

When

When we enquire minutely into the grand operations of nature, we find that there are many difficulties to be solved, that human reason cannot effect, and the notion of a God immediately strikes us; we are to expect then that the nature of the human mind, and of the Deity would next be studied, and a system of moral and religious philosophy be attempted; this was the time then for a Socratic school to arise.

Disputes in philosophy must always be expected, as, in the metaphysical parts, we are obliged to build our systems on hypothesis: Keen and close defences of the opposite parties follow, and now all are intent on weighing the arguments brought on each

each side, comparing and judging; this necessarily leads to an enquiry concerning comparative proportions; at the same time elegance and arts encreasing, we should expect, what at this time was absolutely wanted, a system of proportions and calculations, and Archimedes and Euclid shew'd this the next prevailing taste.

Within the later ages in Britain, or rather in Europe, what remarkable instances have we seen of the progression of manners. A Des Cartes, Lord Bacon, and Galileo graced the same century; a Newton, a Harvey, a Boyle, and a Reaumur, render'd another century immortal; and the present age wants not it's glories: I could shew in one science, and I dare
say

say it is so in others, that the many are deserting an old system, and all, without knowing it, are coming over into a new doctrine ; all, without designing it, are on the point of agreeing. And I believe had Socrates lived when Homer did, he would have been an epic poet ; had Homer been in Athens when Socrates made such a figure there, he would have taught the Athenians to die ; in short, that it is owing to the encreasing stock of foreign ideas, and the gradual improvement in the reasoning faculties, that we have gradually such subtlety in real and sentimental philosophy.

If I have not yet satisfied you, I wish your dissatisfaction may not proceed from your being tired with reading so long

long a letter, having, I fear, thro' hurry been guilty of repetition and error, that may darken my evidences ; however, if still you think my arguments are not sufficiently strong, I shall be proud of being your convert, but remember, I shall not pay one compliment to your sex, without I find I have no other way left of submitting with a good grace.

I am,

Madam,

Your most obliged servant, &c.

LET-

LETTER VII.

To Mrs. G——s.

KNowing your heart, my dear madam, incapable of flattery, I impute the compliment you pay to my young friend's verses to that partiality which growing friendship is apt to inspire. This was one of her first attempts towards poetry, and as such may be passable, tho' it bears the characteristic of a very young writer.

Not having the least suspicion that Marcus had quitted the kingdom, she concluded he must have seen her let-

ter, nor could possibly be at a loss to guess by whom it was written, and thought it so contemptuous a treatment not to return any answer to it, that she no longer look'd on him as worthy of her affectionate friendship, was sincerely griev'd for the loss of a friend who had long been near her heart, yet pride and resentment so far got the better, as to carry it off without any appearance of concern ; her mother was the only person who saw that it was far from sitting easy on her mind, yet thought it better to keep the promise given him, and let the present opinion prevail, than to give her a more serious cause of grief by the knowledge of his real sentiments and consequent unhappiness.

At

At her age it could hardly have been thought possible to fix a friendship on so firm a basis that no time could shake, or even death itself destroy; yet this was literally here the case; his behaviour, in the light it appear'd to her, render'd him no longer the proper object of her tender affection; for that could neither be justified or kept alive but by a return in kind; yet his ceasing to have this peculiar merit with regard to herself, alter'd not her opinion of the intrinsic good qualities of his mind; for these she preserv'd an equal esteem, and still retains it for his memory, though it is now more than twenty years since an empty name was all that remain'd of him on earth, for he lived not to return to England. May

not this be allow'd a proof of the essential difference there is between the passion which often assumes the name of love, and that steady attachment which unites one virtuous mind to another, as the counter-part of itself; in the former, the person and the sex are principally consider'd, in the latter, neither are regarded; the *case* appears to have no merit, but as the repository of the jewel it contains; if on the test of a close examination, a mind is found to possess all those valuable qualities that deserve a perfect friendship, what in reality does it signify, whether it happens to be clothed with a handsome, or an ugly, a male, or a female form? Thus far I must agree in my friend's opinion, that the happiness of mankind would
be

be greatly encreas'd by the prevalence of these refin'd sentiments ; but as experience proves that it is next to impossible for any of the inhabitants of this globe to divest themselves entirely of a particular kind of corporeal ideas, I must look on it as a wild goose chase for any one person, who feels the capacity of so doing, to spend whole years in the search of similar minds, when the chances are a million to one against the finding any such ; it is for this pursuit alone I condemn her, not for that turn which led to it ; for, affected as that may seem, it was certainly natural in her. At the time I am now speaking of, when she had as strong and affectionate an attachment to this young gentleman, as her heart was capable of feeling, sought every

opportunity of conversing with him, and was never so happy in any other company, her regard was of so different a nature from that which appearances gave a just reason to suppose, that she was indefatigable in her endeavours to bring about an advantageous match for him, with a young lady of immense fortune; and I believe would have succeeded, had it not been declined on his part, in the distant hope indulg'd of one day uniting himself to her; but he knew Miss M—— too well to assign this reason; and she was much hurt at not being able to prevail with him to take a step apparently so much for his interest; which she here evidently prefer'd even to the pleasure of his society, that by this means must have been wholly lost to herself.

Long

Long after his decease she heard from his sister his real sentiments and design ; who said, that the doubt of succeeding to his wish in the intended expedition (join'd to an apprehension that the art he had practis'd to conceal his purpose, and farther views, might rob the lover of all the affection the friend had enjoy'd, by rendering him apparently unworthy of her esteem) threw him into a deep melancholy, and the incapacity of writing to her in a stile she could read with pleasure, produc'd the total silence that had appear'd so unaccountable.—This intelligence gave her much concern ; but instead of drawing from it those natural and obvious conclusions, which would have shewn the folly of persisting in a chymical system, that it was

so difficult to reduce to practice, she imputed this unfortunate consequence wholly to her having been kept ignorant of the change in his sentiments; and was convinced, that had he been open in the acknowledgment of this alteration, she could have found arguments to have brought him back to her own opinion, which, by this method of false reasoning, remain'd unshaken by an instance that was so well calculated to prove it's fallacy.

I have singled out this little anecdote, amongst many of the same kind, to serve as a caricature of that turn before described; and have been so particular in the relation to shew you that those who knew her best, and were most desirous of obtaining her esteem,

esteem, thought a conformity to her peculiar sentiments necessary to that purpose. You will no doubt think it most probable that this gentleman hoped, from the beginning, to make such a progress in her affections, as to bring her by degrees over to his opinion; admitting that to be the case, his having never ventur'd to give the most distant hint of such a design to herself, but, on the contrary, been always most careful to avoid raising even a suspicion of his dissenting from her system, must be allow'd a sufficient proof that there was no insincerity, or affectation, in her professions or conduct, it being next to impossible to have carried on either, for so many months, undiscover'd by the penetrating eye of a very sensible man,

who, on that suspicion must have been constantly upon the watch ; nor was this the only person who thus humour'd her inclination, some others acted the same part for a considerable time ; but it generally happen'd, that she had scarce began to think herself happy in the acquisition of the disinterested friend so earnestly sought, before the friend unfortunately became a lover, and disappointed her expectation. The severe mortification felt on such occasions, sometimes produced a transient resolution to relinquish the hope, which was, nevertheless, soon resumed, pursued with equal eagerness, and follow'd by equal disappointment.

The

The amazing contrast in some parts of her character must seem almost incredible to any person who knew her less intimately than myself; the recollection of many inconsistencies, which at the time pass'd unobserved, now strike me with surprise, and none more strongly than her constant endeavours to attract the regards of men, whom she thoroughly despis'd, whose conversation was tiresome to her, and with whom she had no single view, but that of giving to the world an appearance that could not but be disadvantageous to herself. Her chief pleasure was in conversing with people of sense; the adulation of coxcombs she receiv'd with contempt, yet never liked to be seen in public unattended by a train of such suitors, and never scrupled

scrupled encouraging the address of any person whose mind she saw was too weak to be capable of any attachment that could be injurious to himself; none of these were ever dismiss'd, 'till they became so importunate for a final answer, that it was impossible to hold them on any longer in uncertainty; and then some ground of quarrel was sought, for a pretence to discard them: This conduct was extremely prejudicial to her own character; for persons who have not sense enough to be capable of a steady attachment, are often the most irritable and the most violent in their resentments, where the pride happens to be piqued; and sometimes, on such occasions, she has experienc'd that no sarcastical reflection was spared that might

might be prejudicial to her in the world; yet, far from being alarm'd at so dangerous a consequence, asserted, that where the utmost of a malicious and mischievous design went no farther than to prophecy future events, *that* might be regarded as the strongest proof of the innocency of her conduct in essentials, the only point wherein she could be persuaded to think her character could be materially injured; nor was it in the power of any arguments to convince her that the indulgence of the wildest gaiety de cœur in public company, would cast a blemish on the reputation of a girl whom no man, however provoked, could boast the having ever been permitted to see in a room alone. The unavoidable effects of so pernicious a

tenet

tenet are too obvious to need a comment. Sometimes, by the entreaty of persons for whom she had the highest esteem, a little restraint has been laid on the inclination, but that merely to oblige them, without the least abatement of the disposition to an unbounded indulgence of it.

While Mrs. M——'s health permitted her being always in her daughter's parties of pleasure, whose cheerfulness gave so little embarrassment to the young company that they never wish'd to exclude her, this afforded so just a sanction, that not the least reflection was thrown on her character, 'till the good lady's encreasing disease, which confin'd her to the house long before

before it grew very painful, gave an opening to the poison'd tongues of envy and ill-nature to censure the innocent gaiety of my young friend, when she appear'd in public unaccompanied by this excellent protectress.—But to return from this digression.

The departure of Marcus, and the manner in which Mrs. M—— spoke of him, put an entire stop to the prevailing opinion of their intended union ; fresh proposals were made ; in these her mother never went farther than the necessary prudential enquiries as to morals and fortune, on which she gave her sentiments, but left the determination wholly to her daughter. The persons who address'd her in this
formal

formal manner were immediately rejected, one only excepted, who was permitted to hope ; he was then going the tour of Europe, and was not to return under three years. The distance of the period, and the merit of the young gentleman, so far got the better of her dislike to all such formal proposals, which she term'd making love to her mother, as to prevent an absolute refusal ; he had all the accomplishments that she wish'd in a friend, as such she chose to retain him and hoped to succeed, with this view gave some expectations, that if, at his return to England, his addresses were paid to herself, they might prove successful ; and in fact, had he taken the hint, and corresponded with her during his absence, tho' at this time she had no
 fort

fort of intention to marry, it might so have happen'd; the alteration produced by the death of her mother, occasion'd a change of her resolution not a quarter of a year before his return, she would then probably have waited for, and united herself to him: But he not entering at all into the peculiarity of her disposition, continued paying his addresses by a third hand, as the most proper method, at which she was so much piqued as to hasten the disposal of her hand before his arrival. If I mistake not, she gave him this reason for determining to engage herself before his return.

I cannot send off my letter without telling you that Mrs. B—— has just made her husband a present of an heir;

heir ; this was the only thing wanting
 to make their happiness as complete as
 this state of imperfection will admit.
 Ever since the mistake that happen'd
 at Sir T. S——s's *, they have re-
 main'd together in the country, where
 she has been indefatigable in her en-
 deavour to make those improvements
 in her mind that might render her a
 rational companion to a man of sense ;
 in which her excellent husband has
 with the utmost assiduity and satisfac-
 tion assisted : In a letter I have just re-
 ceiv'd from him, with the account of
 the birth of his son, he says, “ I shall
 “ now have, a little time for my fa-
 “ vourite field diversions, which have
 “ this winter all given place to the
 “ more

* See Letter II. of this Volume, Page 9.

“ more pleasing employment of assist-
 “ ing Mrs. B——’s studies, who is
 “ improved beyond my most sanguine
 “ expectations, and gives me every
 “ day new cause to regard the acci-
 “ dent, which produced this revolu-
 “ tion in our domestic system, as the
 “ most fortunate event of my life ; she
 “ joins with me in desiring you will,
 “ as soon as possible, make it conve-
 “ nient to yourself to be a witness
 “ and partaker of that mutual happi-
 “ ness we owe, in great measure, to
 “ your kind mediation.” I cannot
 forbear adding to this a quotation from
 one of Mrs. B——’s letters, wrote
 about a fortnight ago. “ Should the
 “ young stranger we are every day
 “ expecting prove a son, I shall be a
 “ living confutation of all the argu-
 Vol. II. K “ ments

“ments which have been urged to
 “prove the impossibility of attaining
 “perfect happiness upon earth, for
 “that only could add to my present
 “felicity : I reflect with astonishment
 “on my former fondness for diver-
 “sions, for which I have no longer
 “any taste ; and, since I have been
 “made acquainted with the superior
 “pleasures resulting from rational en-
 “tertainments, most sincerely regret
 “the time that has been wasted in so
 “insignificant a manner.”

This account gave me inexpressible
 pleasure : There is no room to doubt
 but that sentiments so feelingly de-
 scribed, will be as permanent as they
 are just ; for I am convinced, by re-
 peated observation, that nothing more

is

is necessary to reclaim a sensible woman from pursuits that are below her understanding, than to prevail with her to try, by way of experiment, the difference between the transient, empty, unsatisfying pleasures of a life of dissipation, and the substantial happiness resulting from a steady rational conduct; so great are the advantages on the side of the latter, that once to taste the difference, is sufficient to ensure a constant preference. To this the early prejudice of an improper education often proves an almost unsurmountable obstacle: Taught from infancy to connect the idea of happiness with those of dress, equipage, company, and a succession of trifling amusements; and that of misery with those of retirement, reflection,

tion, and reading; this false association of ideas becomes frequently so habitual, as to remain inseparable, even to the end of life; hence it is that we sometimes see ladies, whose minds are of that superior class, which, properly improved, might qualify them for almost any sphere of action; devote their whole time to employments and pursuits that are scarcely excusable even in the weakest. A striking instance of this truth may be found in a lady you know, who, with a capacity that would have made a figure in a minister of state, a firmness and resolution that would have graced a general, a natural sweetness and complacency of temper, that seems form'd to make her an agreeable companion, and to promote the happiness of all around her,

her, has so perverted the gifts of nature, as to become the pest of society, the terror and aversion of her acquaintance, the plague of all with whom she is nearly connected, and the object of universal dislike; hated by one sex, and despised by the other; wholly owing to her having bestowed all her attention on her person, and the forming schemes of gallantry, and totally neglecting every improvement of the mind: With equal surprise and concern have I seen her carry on an improper pursuit for months, with an invariable steadiness that in a good cause would have done her honour, attending to every collateral circumstance, without losing a single opportunity that could be improved to forward the success of the point

in view ; turning every incident to advantage, in a manner that discover'd an uncommon penetration and natural abilities, equal to almost any undertaking. What pity is it that such superior talents should be so grossly misapplied, and that parts, which might have made her an ornament of the present, and a shining example to all future ages, should be employ'd only to prove the deformity of her mind equal to the beauty of her person.

I am of opinion that had her husband attempted to work upon her vanity rather than her reason, he might have been more successful in his endeavours to reclaim her ; it being far less difficult, upon the same principle, to give a different turn to the

the object of pursuit, than to make a total change of sentiment and design; had the former been effected, the latter would most certainly, by slow degrees, have insensibly follow'd; but by his aiming at once to enforce a conviction of the advantages of such a change, the horrid idea of misery, long connected with the notions of retirement, reading, and rural amusements, made the thought of the country, where a rational scheme of life was proposed, not less hateful than that of a prison, and set her ingenuity at work to prevent the possibility of making the experiment he so earnestly wish'd. Is it not surprising that women, whose understandings are infinitely above the general standard of the sex, should not be laudably ambitious of shining in a

sphere wherein those superior talents might be display'd to advantage, rather than descend to a level with the weakest by a conduct equally ridiculous, and a life equally insignificant with those whose half-form'd faculties incapacitate them for any thing beyond the pursuit of trifles? The love of praise is most certainly predominant in the sex, wisely interwoven in their composition for the most valuable purposes, and acts in all with less variation than almost any other propensity; where a natural imbecility admits not of any mental improvement, the pride of person may be essentially serviceable, and ought by no means to be condemn'd; but a vanity of this sort is inexcusable in all who might boast a much superior kind

kind of excellence : Would these justly consider beauty as their least perfection, pay to it but a proportionable regard, and give their chief attention to the acquiring that sort of useful knowledge peculiarly adapted to their particular province, wherein superior abilities might be set off to the highest advantage, what a set of shining examples should we soon have of the most valuable character in human life ! No sphere of action is capable of being made more beneficial to society, and consequently none can merit higher commendation than that of fulfilling, with constant prudence and propriety, the various duties of a wife, a mother, and mistress of a family : Could this once be made the prevailing ambition of the ladies, such is their
in-

influence, that in less than half a century, a total reformation of manners must ensue; thus might their natural love of admiration be gratified by immortal praise, and glorious annals from age to age preserve their deathless fame! How mortifying is it to observe this radiant prospect daily obscured by the mist of early prejudice, which, condensed by habit, and colour'd by false lights, assumes a thousand gaudy shapes, that lead the mistaken pursuer through a succession of follies, but to entail contempt, and end in disappointment. How beautifully strong, how inimitably just is that description of Mr. Pope's!

See how the world it's veterans rewards,
A youth of frolicks, an old age of cards;

Fair

Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,
 Young without lovers, old without a friend;
 A sop their passion, and their prize a sot,
 Alive ridiculous, and dead forgot.

Poor as my verses will appear in the
 same page with his, I must attempt
 to give you the opposite character,
 which I think ought always to be
 subjoin'd.

Behold the contrast, when the youthful mind
 Is to improvement by it's choice confin'd,
 Knowledge then gain'd, and virtuous habits
 form'd

Add charms to beauty: Beauty thus adorn'd,
 Retains it's conquest to the latest stage;
 What young was love, is friendship in old age;
 Wisdom their passion, happiness their prize,
 They live belov'd, and VIRTUE never dies.

If you are not tired with my
 rhymes, which is more than possi-
 ble,

ble, I believe you must be so by the length of my letter, therefore will not detain you longer than to subscribe myself with unalterable esteem,

My dear madam,

Most affectionately yours, &c.

L E T -

LETTER VIII.

To Miss Louisa —.

YOUR sentiments, my dear Louisa, are so extremely just on the duties of the state you are on the point of entering into, that any advice on that head appears unnecessary to a person who thinks so justly, and whose excellent heart never needs more than a conviction of what is right, to ensure the steady practice of it. Yet the earnest manner in which you entreat my thoughts on the subject, will not permit me to refuse giving my opinion, which corresponds exactly with your own, as to the practical duties
of

of a wife. My general sentiments on that head, you have already perused in my printed letter of advice to my daughter in the 57th and subsequent pages. If any particular circumstances occur to you that are there omitted, I shall most willingly give you my farther sentiments ; tho' I am convinced, from the prudence of your choice, you will never have occasion to study more than the two first pages.

At present I shall only point out where I think you err in theory, from not having sufficiently consider'd the utter impossibility of preserving any one institution in it's original purity and perfection, amidst the total change of manners, customs, religion, and
go-

government, that has been since introduced. I entirely agree with you, that marriage is capable of affording the most perfect and lasting happiness we can here enjoy; have never doubted the divine origin of an institution so well calculated to promote the felicity of mankind, nor do I see that the wisdom, benevolence, or utility of the original design is at all impeach'd by the great number of miserable wretches who daily fret beneath the yoke, to which they have inadvertently submitted; the matrimonial union is, nevertheless, the best blessing of mortality, ordain'd to compensate for all the painful sensations to which human nature is liable; the reason why we so seldom see this truth exemplified in married people is, that
 this

this union hardly ever subsists between those whose hands are join'd in wedlock.

Expect not, my dear Louisa, form'd as your heart is for the enjoyment of the most perfect conjugal felicity, to possess that blessing in it's utmost extent to which the education of our youth, and the established customs of the world, have now placed almost insuperable bars.

For some centuries after the creation, the natural simplicity of manners prevailing, this institution very probably remain'd uncorrupted; nature was then the only law to love, and constancy was nature's dictate. The youths and virgins, bred up in perfect

perfect purity of sentiment, join'd promiscuous in their rural sports, unconscious of a thought they need have blush'd to own; having nothing to conceal, truth ever dwelt upon the lip of each, and every sentiment was freely utter'd; thus their mutual dispositions were early known with certainty: By a similarity of temper and inclination, a band of amity was form'd in childhood, which, encreasing with their years, was ripen'd into love; their hands were then united, and, from that moment, their interest and their happiness were so inseparably connected, that each felt the least infringement of the others repose destructive of their own; of consequence their pleasures or their pains were mutually enjoy'd or suffer'd, the former

redoubled, and half the burthen of the latter removed by the tender participation. An infant affection, that took it's rise from an early similitude of disposition, when ratified by the approbation of maturer judgment, was *naturally* encreas'd by the possession of the beloved object, and as inseparable from the mind as the principle of self-love; each consider'd the possession of the other as the best of temporal blessings, consequently not even a transient wish to change could enter into the heart of either; the result of this indissoluble band of affection was so perfect an unanimity, that the happy pair appear'd to be actuated by the same mind, and equally incapable of enjoying or suffering separately; the growing pledges of their mutual

mutual love, encreas'd their mutual joys: Idleness was unknown to these early ages of the world; none thought themselves above the occupations which God and nature had design'd them for. The mother's tender care of their infant offspring, still more endear'd her to the father's heart; the laborious office to her was doubly recompens'd by his encreasing fondness, and their natural returns of filial affection; soon as the stage of infancy was past, with added pleasure she beheld her husband succeed to the delightful charge, and with assiduous care instruct, and form their tender minds to virtue: Thus happy in the society of each other, occupied in the nurture and education of their children, pleased with observing their daily im-

provements, and entertain'd by their innocent prattle and childish plays, the domestic scene was replete with every kind of felicity ; no vacant hours hung heavy on their hands, for every part of the day had it's assign'd and rational employment ; nor could *they* seek for foreign joys, who, within the circle of their own family, found all the blessings that constitute the most perfect happiness of human nature.

This was the matrimonial union, kindly ordain'd to sweeten all the ills of life, and heighten every pleasure man was form'd to enjoy.

—But where, Louisa, is it now to be found ? Can our modern marriages boast, in any instance, a similitude ? I fear not : It is not the insti-

tution

tation then we should condemn, the fault lies in our deviation from the original design, by which the best of human blessings has been often converted into the severest curse : That it will not prove such to you is most certain ; on the contrary, there is all the probability imaginable of your being as happy as any two people can expect to be on the present system. Mr. A—— is sensible, good natured, prudent, and fond of you ; you will improve by his conversation, while your's will not be unentertaining to him ; the sweetness of your disposition will preserve his temper unruffled ; unlike the generality of wives, your first principle of action will be to please your husband ; I say the first, because I know you will regard this as an es-

fential part of your duty to God.
 The company he likes will, for that
 reason, be the most agreeable to you ;
 the dress which pleases him best, will
 by you be regarded as the most
 becoming to yourself ; and should
 his taste happen to be singular, you
 will always think his choice a sufficient
 and justifiable reason for your deviat-
 ing from the prevailing fashion. Cer-
 tain am I, that you will make his
 inclination the guide of all your
 actions ; that his good sense, and
 amiable disposition, will never suffer
 him to exact a compliance in things
 he knows to be disagreeable to you,
 and that every part of your conduct
 will be such, as to fix in his breast a
 steady friendship, founded on an un-
 alterable esteem of your virtues ; This,
 my

my dear friend, is the point which every prudent wife ought alone to aim at ; all beyond, as things are now circumstanced, is mere chimera. You carry your expectations a little too high, and run the hazard of being chagrin'd by disappointment ; your notions are better suited to the original institution, which, believe me, no longer exists, nor can consistently with the present establish'd customs, and manners of the world ; consider the nature of that sort of acquaintance that now generally precedes matrimony, or indeed is thought necessary to precede it : Will the modern customs permit it's being of that artless, open, and intimate kind, which alone could give the young people any certain knowledge of each others disposition ?

The prevailing education lays a continual restraint on the freedom of conversation ; by degrees we acquire a habit of acting a *part*, that nature wou'd never have dictated ; this habit by use often sits so easy, that the most penetrating eye will not discover the artifice, and many people find it less difficult to appear what they ought to be, than to become really such ; the former may be generally so well sustain'd in public, as to pass upon the world unsuspected, but cannot possibly be kept up thro' all the scenes of private life. Hence it is, that when marriage, by creating an intimacy which takes off this restraint, discovers the mistake on either side, a little sourness of temper, insensibly arising from the mutual disappointment,

ment, often, in weak minds, en-
 creases into an absolute dislike of each
 other, before they are even conscious
 of the original cause; too quick a
 sensibility sometimes produces the
 same effect, where there is no want
 of understanding; to this source may
 be imputed half the misery we daily
 see sustain'd by those who bear the
 yoke, that, on the present system,
 too frequently galls the wearer. You,
 my dear Louisa, have as little inten-
 tional artifice in your behaviour as
 any girl breathing; and may, per-
 haps, be ready at once to assert that
 you never practise any; yet on a can-
 did examination of your own heart,
 you will, I dare say, acknowledge
 that your silence on a late subject of
 conversation was occasion'd by an un-
 willingness

willingness to discover to Mr. A—— that your sentiments of the matter in dispute were very different from those he had just declared to be his ; this silence may be term'd a species of art, by which your real opinion was conceal'd, perhaps, from an apprehension that the acknowledgment of it might make a disadvantageous impression on his mind with regard to your judgment ; the same motive may probably have influenced him, on some other occasion, to a similar conduct ; thus, with all the natural openness of disposition, you both may justly boast, it is more than possible that in many instances you are yet wholly unknown to each other : Carry this thought on, trace it thro' all the possible consequences, and you

you will see how very useful it may prove to be prepared for events, that at present appear not at all probable.

Expect to find your husband's opinion and temper in some things different from what you have hitherto thought, and should it so happen, you will by that means escape the mortification of a disappointment, and be able, with more ease and cheerfulness, to accommodate yourself to what at first may be a little disagreeable.

Your ideas must be a good deal lower'd, to bring them to the present standard of truth; what may be now very justly called a happy marriage, will fall short of your visionary scheme.

That

That you are capable of placing your whole happiness in the society of Mr. A——, and will be perfectly content to quit all other company and live wholly for him, I can easily believe; but that does not, by any means, authorise you to expect the same from him; he has many acquaintance and connections, which his rank and situation oblige him to keep up, bears a public character that ought to be sustain'd, and you must not think yourself neglected though engagements, which these may make necessary, should often occasion his absence; besides this, it must be remember'd that he is a man of the gay world, habituated to much company, and the fashionable amusements, which you are to expect will
 still

still engross a part of his time; nor ought you to demand any sacrifices of this kind, as a necessary proof of his affection to you.—In short, my dear Louisa, you must take the whole of the present system of things into the account, and make your plan of future happiness consistent with that, or it will prove a painful theory which can never be reduced to practice.

Be content to exchange the passionate lover for the affectionate husband, and make it your only point deservedly to maintain the first place in his esteem; in which your expectation will never be disappointed; rest satisfied, if, when alone, he appears pleased with your conversation, without

out indulging a wish to confine him wholly to it, or even endeavouring to lay the least restraint of that sort on his inclination. This is the rock on which your happiness is in the greatest danger of being wreck'd, owing to your having adapted your notions of conjugal felicity to what marriage originally was, but never will be again, unless mankind should once more return to a state of nature, of which, I believe, there is very little probability. Yet notwithstanding all the disadvantages this institution now labours under, it will be found, when two persons of good sense, good nature, tractable tempers, and an affectionate regard for each other, chance to meet, even yet, the most happy situation in life.

You

You are peculiarly fortunate in possessing all these qualifications yourself, and still more so to find them in the person to whom you are going to be united. I have no doubt of your fulfilling every part of your duty with the utmost propriety; do not lose the satisfaction, which would naturally result from this, by indulging expectations that must necessarily be disappointed.

Your notion of marriage is as enthusiastical as Lady C——'s religious opinions, which you have so often endeavour'd to reason her out of. Contract your views within the bounds of present possibility, and you will ensure to yourself certain felicity.

Your

Your last observations, on Alphonso's adventures, are premature; suspend your judgment 'till you have read to the end; you will then find your objections fully answer'd, and that the system he endeavours to establish does not, in the least degree, infringe that freedom of agency which alone can render man an accountable being.

Adieu, my dear Louisa, believe me,
with unalterable affection,

Ever your's, &c.

The

The ADVENTURES of ALPHONSO,
continued.

ANTONIO beheld, with inexpressible concern, this alteration in the conduct of a youth, of whom he had form'd the most sanguine expectations; he regarded him with paternal tenderness, and often mildly expostulated with him in the terms of an affectionate father, which had no other effect upon the ungrateful heart of Francisco, than to confirm him in the opinion of his own importance; he grew every day more arrogant and imperious; at length, apprehensive that his repeated irregularities might entirely eradicate that parental affection Don Antonio had long felt for him,

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he determined to free himself from the fears of future poverty, by the execrable resolution of poisoning his patron, and at the same time securing to himself the possession of his immense fortune.

To this end he forged a will in the hand of a deceased attorney, adding, as witnesses, the names of two persons also deceased, bequeathing to himself all the estate and effects of which Antonio should die possess'd; to make this more plausible, the will enjoin'd a marriage between his sister Artimissa and Francisco, subjecting the latter to the payment of ten thousand pounds if the marriage was declined on his part; if refused by her, only to the payment of a trifling annuity

nulty for her life ; amongst other papers of business this will was signed by Antonio without examination. Not having trusted any person with his diabolical designs, Francisco imagined himself secured against the possibility of detection, and thought nothing more remain'd but to dispatch his patron and take an indisputable possession of his estate : For this purpose he prepared poison of the most subtile kind, by a receipt he had formerly obtain'd from an Indian ; how to administer the dose to Antonio only, was now the difficulty ; various experiments were made on animals, by which he discover'd, that blowing a small quantity of this fatal powder up the nostrils would instantly extinguish the vital flame ; snuff therefore was

fix'd on as the most proper vehicle. A box exactly similar to Antonio's was procured, in which, with the sort of snuff he usually took, this destructive powder was so artfully mix'd as to be imperceptible either to the sight or smell. Soon as the composition was prepared, he tried it's efficacy upon an old dog, whose faithful services had render'd him the favourite of the whole family. The animal, without a struggle, fell breathless at his feet, and no marks of violence appearing, his death was supposed to be natural. Charm'd with a success that answer'd his most sanguine expectations, he hasten'd, elate with joy, to make the fatal exchange.

The

The tenderness with which, notwithstanding all his misconduct, the good old man received him, impressed a momentary horror at the thought of his own ingratitude. A transient remorse fill'd his breast—he wish'd it possible to obtain possession of the estate, without the murder of his patron. A sudden thought arose, that it might be practicable to prevail upon Antonio's affection, to give him his sister in marriage, and settle his estate in reversion on them, by which ambition and avarice would be gratified, without the hazard of violent measures. Intoxicated by this wild imagination, he forgot that the only chance of succeeding, in such an attempt, must be by the soft arts of insinuation, the appearance of filial af-

fection to his patron, and so warm an attachment to Artimiffa, as to make his happiness depend on such an union.

Behold here, Alphonso, a proof of the deplorable situation to which that man is reduced, who, by repeatedly and resolutely rejecting our admonitions, has in a manner forced us to abandon him to those malicious beings who watch the moment of our departure to confirm every vicious habit, strengthen every criminal wish into the design of perpetration, and urge to the immediate commission of every intended crime; by these means endeavouring to hasten his progress to a place from whence they, by sad experience, know the utter impossibility of

of a return to virtue. Man while an inhabitant of this planet, can never arrive at so harden'd a pitch of vice as to be entirely free'd from the horrors of a transient remorse; while any hope of his amendment permits the continuance of our attendance, we seize those favourable moments and leave no means unessay'd to improve that transient force of conviction into a sincere repentance, and just abhorrence of guilt; and often succeed to our utmost wish even in the very instant intended for the perpetration of some long premeditated crime; but when incorrigible depravity has drove us from our charge, these short lived impressions never produce any other effect than an intended variation of the means to accom-

plish the proposed end, and the malevolent spirit who has succeeded to the post we have reluctantly deserted, intent only on the production of evil, endeavours not to prevent a change of measures that, so far from obstructing the main point in view, often proves instrumental in accumulating a heavier load of guilt; and indeed, every check of this kind, from reason or conscience, in the pursuit of vice is an aggravation of the crimes of him by whom it is rejected. The malevolent attendant, who succeeded to that guardian angel by whom Francisco was abandon'd the moment that all endeavours were found ineffectual to prevent the preparation of the fatal powder for so horrid a purpose, regarded his present irresolution in

in this light, and fully satisfied with the total corruption of his heart, opposed not the effects of a conviction that produced not any design of reformation, and extended no farther than a desire of accomplishing the same end, by means less dangerous and equally sure ; the less of probability there was in this hope, the more forcibly was it encouraged, and the more impetuously was he urged to the immediate prosecution of the ill-concerted plan ; without a moment's consideration, he made the insolent demand as the just reward of his services, which were exaggerated with an assurance beyond the power of imagination to conceive——Antonio, scarce giving credit to his own ears, beheld him with an astonishment that
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for a few moments suspended the power of speech : At this interval, in pursuance of the summons I had received, you entered the room ; Francisco's arm was at that moment stretched out to take up Antonio's snuff-box, which stood on the table, with an intention to leave the other in it's place if the answer, he was impatiently expecting, proved unfavourable to his wishes,——Vex'd to be interrupted in so critical a moment, he retired with visible emotion, telling Antonio in a low voice, that he should attend his determination in the evening.——The soul of Francisco, as he spoke this short sentence, was so strongly pictured on his countenance, that it redoubled the amazement of the good old man, who now regarded

ed him with a mixture of terror, pity, and abhorrence, and saw him depart with that kind of satisfaction which a man feels at being deliver'd from the pursuit of a wild beast, though not unaccompanied by the heart-felt grief of a tender father, at the total depravity of a son that was once inexpressibly dear to him. Your own anxiety prevented your observing the agitation of Antonio's mind, whose thoughts were too much occupied by this disagreeable subject to give much attention to any other, 'till the extreme reluctance you express'd to the plan proposed by your uncle, and the earnestness with which you ask'd his advice, awaken'd in his breast those sentiments of generous concern, which every good heart feels

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at seeing a worthy youth in so distressing a situation ; he well knew your disposition and character, and had often pointed you out as a laudable example to Francisco, the contrast was now particularly striking ; the favourable impression which naturally resulted from the comparison, was enforced by the guardian power that watch'd the good man's safety, who instantly presented in a collected view, the danger of keeping a man of Francisco's abandon'd principles in the post he now occupied, and the various advantages that might accrue from your supplying his place. Antonio hesitated not to obey the impulse, or you to accept the proposals made in consequence of it ; an agreement was instantly form'd to your mutual

mutual satisfaction ; all that has follow'd to yourself you know, nor shall I repeat more than a few instances to shew you the manner in which my attendance has been eminently useful to you on different occasions.—The fate of Francisco, which you are as yet ignorant of, I shall also relate to you.

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LETTER IX.

To Mrs. G——s.

MUST I, my dear friend, impute the extreme pleasure you express at the receipt of my letters, to your affection for me, or to the impatience of your curiosity, which outruns my power of gratifying it, tho' every moment unoccupied by necessary engagements, is devoted to that employment? The latter most certainly has a great share, but the former flatters my vanity too much, not to suppose it in part the cause of the joy which, you say, visibly dances in your eyes, at the sight of a packet from

from me. Exclusive of these two motives, the many blunders, and the miserable scrawl, occasion'd by the haste I always write in, would make my letters not worth the trouble of picking out their meaning ; but giving to these the weight I believe they have with you, I shall take it for granted you will be better pleas'd by the length than the correctness of my epistles, and scribble on as fast as the pen will go, without looking over a word after it is written, that as many pages may be filled as the time will permit, before the departure of the post.

You desire me not to suppress a single circumstance that my memory can recal ; the obliging reason given
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for this request proves how warmly you are interested in every thing relative to my friend, and gives me all the happiness that must result from such a disposition in you towards her, which confirms my expectation of seeing you soon united by the indissoluble band of the most tender friendship; the necessary consequence of a thorough knowledge of each others worth. Rest assured, that no incident of any material consequence shall be omitted; those of a more trifling nature (excepting only such as particularly point the character) must be deferr'd 'till we meet, for it would fill a folio to go through all the peculiarities of the early part of her life, which indeed was scarcely, in any instance, like that of any other person.

person. This injudicious love of singularity was, after the death of her mother, extended even to dress, which was always regulated by some whim of her own, and never conformable to the reigning fashion ; oddities of this kind passing off well enough in her of course produced many awkward imitations ; with these copies she was highly diverted, which long after the original habit was quitted remain'd the objects of just ridicule : This seems to carry the appearance of a species of ill-nature, that in reality was ever foreign from her heart ; the pleasure arising from hence was merely of that childish kind, which one boy feels at having leapt farther, or run faster, than others of his own age ; and only the result of that va-

nity which in a young mind flows from a supposed consciousness of superior merit.—Tho' secretly pleas'd with observing the awkward imitation, she neither pointed out the folly to others, or join'd in the laugh it sometimes produced, but was earnest in the endeavour to silence the public ridicule. This must be placed amongst those inconsistencies which stamp a peculiar mark on the character: However opposite the disposition which delights in leading weak minds into conspicuous folly appears, to that which is hurt by hearing ill-natured reflections cast on any individual, both were so equally strong in her, that the satisfaction arising from the event was counterpoised by it's natural consequences, which her
utmost

utmost power was then exerted to prevent. It was a constant maxim with her, even from the earliest youth, never to repeat any ill-natured report; her sentiments on detraction were so well known to her acquaintance, that whoever wish'd to be well with her made their court by putting the most favourable construction on all those actions of others, which successively happen'd to be the subject of general conversation; and I can truly say that she never related a circumstance to the disadvantage of a single person in the world, but when necessitated to do it in justification of herself, or her friends, against some false accusation. Whether this proceeded from virtue, benevolence, and true good-nature, or

was only the result of a happy natural temper, the whole tenor of her life will best evince——but whatever the motive, the fact remains the same.

I had forgot to mention her having a strong tendency to religious enthusiasm, which appear'd as early as such a turn could shew itself; this was by no means constant, but by starts that lasted only a few weeks or months at a time, according to the strength of those impressions by which it was occasionally produced. The seeds of this enthusiasm were sown in her young mind by her father as soon as the soil was capable of receiving them, and repeated so incessantly that

that some could not fail of taking root and bringing forth their fruits.

In the midst of all her gaiety of heart, every melancholy scene, every extraordinary phenomenon, or accidental calamity occasion'd a fit of devotion; and a kind of natural aversion, if it may be so term'd, to a medium in any thing made this too violent to be lasting; whole days were then spent in acts of piety, private and public prayers with the reading religious books were her chief employment; and this was carried on with so much zeal that she was perfectly happy in the occupation, and in reality no company was then prefer'd to her father's, whose whole conversation might, in

the Apostle's words, have been said to be in heaven. Nothing could have delighted him more ; and no pains, on his part, were spared to confirm and strengthen a disposition so correspondent to his own ; but he had the mortification to see these fits of devotion always subside, when the melancholy occasion that had produced them either ceased, or was by time grown familiar. I am sorry that none of the letters written by her in these pious moods are to be found as they would have entertain'd you ; several of the good old gentleman's are preserved, one of which shall be inclosed in this, and will speak his sentiments better than I can describe them.

Enthu-

Enthusiasm of this kind, however strongly inculcated, however warmly embraced, can never be attended with ill consequences but in weak minds; where the understanding is good, I am convinced that no tendency can be more advantageous to young persons of very lively dispositions: In such, there is no danger of it's being carried, on either hand, to a pernicious height; good sense will be a sufficient security against those wild and frantic flights, whose origin may always be traced up to native folly, while a sprightly turn prevents any danger of that unhappy despondency, which is the product of a dull phlegmatic melancholy constitution. Thus secured from these dangerous extremes, I look on that sort of enthusi-

asm, which in the gay season of youth frequently recalls the attention, and fixes it for a time wholly on religious subjects, as extremely serviceable toward the keeping alive those principles that, as reason advances, form by degrees a solid foundation for a steady and rational piety.

Tho' these serious moods wore off so as to leave scarce any visible impression behind, yet, like a fire smother'd, but not extinguish'd, the latent power remain'd of being easily rekindled on any new occasion: Sometimes two or three starts of this uncommon devotion would happen in a year, which regularly gave place again to an equal extreme of thoughtless gaiety; in each of these humours
her

her conduct was wholly guided by the prevailing disposition, every action, every word partook it's influence; hence arose the most striking inconsistencies of behaviour; the pious resolutions form'd in the serious, vanish'd in the gay turn of mind; the former were then unjustly censured as hypocrisy, though each was equally sincere, and but the honest and open expression of those sentiments, which at the time prevail'd.

Very few people, enter enough into characters to form a right judgment of actions; a warm profession, either of religion or friendship, may be contradicted by an opposite subsequent conduct without amounting to a presumptive proof that those professions

feffions were false and made with an intent to deceive ; all that can from hence with certainty be deduced is, an unsteadiness of temper, and too great a precipitancy in forming resolutions and opinions, without strength of mind sufficient to persevere in the former, or judgment enough to ascertain the rectitude of the latter. To merit the heavy charge of hypocrisy the professions and the conduct must at the same time be evidently inconsistent with each other, and this could never be imputed to her in any instance. At the age I am speaking of, an affection founded on a mistaken opinion of some intimate associates has sometimes occasion'd too hasty a declaration of friendship, this was immediately retracted on a dis-

discovery of the mistake ; but as the reasons were given only to the person concern'd, a consequent cessation of all intimacy has often been thought, by others, to proceed from an inconsistency of temper, though in reality it was the result of an uniform adherence to the same principle ; she was not ignorant of this censure, but could never allow herself to remove it by speaking those truths that must injure the character of any person to whom she had once, however injudiciously, profess'd a friendship. The charge of hypocrisy sat to the full as easy ; conscious of equal sincerity in both cases, the mistaken opinion of the world, in either, had no great weight.

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The absence of Marcus, for whom she retain'd a very tender affection, join'd to his unexpected silence was some check to her usual gaiety of temper, and her mother's illness, which succeeded immediately after, so far encreas'd the solemn turn as to produce a fit of devotion, that lasted I believe near six months; during this time she neither visited or received company when it could be avoided, seldom went out but to church, and paid the closest attendance on Mrs. M——, who being apprehensive that so unusual a confinement would in time prove injurious to her daughter's health, often engaged her in parties of diversion; at first, she obey'd with reluctance, but these engagements be-

became gradually more agreeable 'till by slow degrees the usual gaiety return'd, and consequently the continuance of them a matter of choice. The good lady foreseeing her own disorder might be of long duration, and having very little if any hope of recovery, supported her pain with a degree of cheerfulness that would not permit a face of sorrow in her presence; nothing displeas'd her more than the appearance of grief on her account, 'twas to make her life, she said, a burthen to herself to suppose it a source of uneasiness to her family and friends; the least alteration in any part of their behaviour gave her so much visible disturbance that they all endeavour'd to appear equally cheerful, and made no sort of difference
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in their conduct on account of her illness. Yet this was afterwards made a heavy charge against my young friend to her father by a person who, in as near a relation, had nevertheless acted in the same manner. This person had been before made her enemy by a piece of childish folly, which her youth ought to have excused; that of quitting a mourning habit for a grandfather, who had been many years superannuated, a few weeks before it was left off by others in the same relation to him. The generality of mankind find those offences the least pardonable, which hurt their pride, this was here the case, and the remembrance of an imagin'd affront might give so strong a prejudice, as perhaps really to place her

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actions in the most disadvantageous light; which in some measure may excuse the misrepresentation of them. I would willingly assign this reason, for I cannot allow myself to believe that any person, who makes a serious profession of the christian religion, can so far indulge the desire of revenge as deliberately to retaliate even an injury, much less to punish an affront, that evidently was not intentional.

The happiness or misery of a whole life has sometimes turn'd on a single circumstance, apparently the most trifling; and I know not whether this false step might not have been the original cause of that treatment which occasion'd my friend's imprudent
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marriage, by making those persons her enemies, whose influence over her father gave them continual opportunities of crossing her inclinations. I must bid you adieu for the present, my dear friend, Mrs. R——'s coach has just stopt at the door, her visit will probably be too long to allow my adding more by this post, shall therefore leave you to peruse the old gentleman's letter, and only subscribe myself with unalterable affection ever most sincerely

Your's.

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LETTER X.

From Mr. M—— to his Daughter.

My dear

I TAKE this opportunity to remind you that right action, the exercise of reason, and the constant uniform practice of virtue are matters not only beautiful in speculation, but exceedingly amiable and ornamental in life; the critical time of which is what you are now advancing to, and according to the impressions now made on your heart is like to be the happiness, or the infelicity, of your condition here and hereafter; if you would be rescued from the fatal snares

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and temptations, and avoid the rocks of youthful vanity and folly, that so many have split upon, and utterly ruin'd themselves by, before they have been well aware, your way is plain before you ; contemplate seriously and frequently the rectitude of the divine nature ; transcribe the moral excellencies of it in your own mind, that so you may be in some measure, what God Himself is, *i. e.* Holy, Just, true, and righteous altogether ; then you will be conscious of the merited esteem of all the knowing and intelligent of your own species, I mean all the Wise and Good, and will be effectually convinced that the applause of fools is in itself contemptible.

A soul where laws, both human and divine,
 In practice more than speculation shine;
 A genuine virtue of a vig'rous kind,
 Pure in the last recesses of the mind, &c.

Dryden's Juv.

Are words I know treasured up in
 your memory, let the things signified
 by them, sink into your spirit so as to
 form your conduct, and render you as
 the salt of the earth, and the light
 of the world, that God may bless you,
 and make you to become a bless-
 ing: I would fain convince you of
 the real vanity and utter insufficiency
 of all sublunary things to make you
 happy; sure I am that nothing can
 do this, but what is as extensive as your
 wishes, and as lasting as your soul; see
 then that you walk circumspectly not

as fools, but as wife, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offence 'till the coming of the Lord; so shall you experience the difference between a filial and a slavish fear, when the thunder shall roar, and the lightning shall flash, as of late, an honest practical regard to what I have here hinted will bring you to have your delight in the Almighty, and help you to lift up your face to him with hope, and joyous expectation, and rejoice the heart of him who is,

Your Father and Friend, &c.

P. S. I sent some wine to the poor widow last week, I know not but she

she may be dying; send her half a crown — I choose rather you would carry it yourself, that your eye may affect your heart, when you behold and compare her circumstances in life with your own.

The END of the second Volume.

this may be doing; send her half a
 crown — I choose rather you would
 only it yourself, but one way
 affect your I you behold
 and compare I in life
 with your own.



The END of the second volume.